

**Port Macquarie Community College Inc**

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# **Student Handbook**

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# ***Welcome to our College***

The Port Macquarie Community College welcomes you to your learning experience. The Port Macquarie Community College (PMCC) is a community-based organisation committed to providing an educational service to the community of Port Macquarie and surrounding district. Teaching and learning is the core business of the College and we are committed to achieving the highest possible standard of outcomes for students and customers.

This Student Handbook has been designed as a means of student induction and also as a guide to the documentation of the College that is available to you.

## ***1. About PMCC***

Port Macquarie Community College Inc. is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984. In line with the requirements of the Act, it has a Management Committee that sets the overall business and policy directions of the College. We offer over 500 courses each year and annually receive over 4,000 enrolments.

Our courses and services fall into three categories:

- general and leisure courses
- vocational programs, and
- community support.

For the accredited vocational programs offered, Port Macquarie Community College is a Registered Training provider (RTO) under the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF). This registration meets the standards of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). PMCC is also certified under the Adult and Community Education Quality Strategy (ACEQS).

The College has in place a comprehensive set of systems that ensure the effective, ethical and accountable operation of the business and the provision of quality teaching and learning outcomes that meet student needs and national standards for outcomes.

## ***2. Code of Practice***

*As a Community College we undertake to:*

- Observe the principles and good practices of adult education,
- Seek to satisfy our clients' learning needs,
- Seek continuously to improve our performance, in all aspects of our work,
- Consult with the community and seek to respond to its learning needs and expectations,
- Act ethically, honestly, fairly and openly at all times,

- Ensure access and equity in all our dealings with students and staff,
- Reject discrimination in all its forms,
- Provide equal employment opportunities and professional development opportunities for our staff,
- Adhere to truth in our advertising and the promotion of our services,
- Maintain sound financial management, and
- Observe all the legislative and regulatory obligations under which we operate.

### **3. Student Code of Conduct**

#### ***Rights***

- ☺ You have a right to have your learning needs met by the tutor within the scope of the competencies of the course.
- ☺ You will be treated with respect and provided with a safe learning environment. All people have human worth and dignity and must be respected. You are expected to treat those you come into contact with, whether student/tutor/administration staff, with dignity and fairness. In an adult learning environment we recognise that we are all different and have different views on politics, religion and matters of community interest. We acknowledge the experience and life skills which adults bring to the class.
- ☺ Students with a disability are to receive support and positive approaches which will focus on their abilities and allow them to reach maximum potential.
- ☺ Students have the right to normal privacy afforded all citizens in personal matters.
- ☺ Students have a right to a refund of course fees in accordance with the refund policy.
- ☺ Tutors and staff have the right to be able to perform their duties in an atmosphere of order and co-operation.
- ☺ You have a right to learn in an appropriate environment and that all people using the College services have a right to be free from any form of harassment and/or discrimination.
- ☺ You have the right to expect a competent and appropriately qualified tutor and achieve the expected course outcomes.
- ☺ You have the right to one re-assessment if the competency is not achieved first time.

## ***Responsibilities and Expectations***

- ☺ All students should act and behave in a way that does not endanger, intimidate or interfere with the participation of others.
- ☺ Students are required to dress appropriately, keeping in mind the nature of the course they are attending. Dress should reflect industry and community standards.
- ☺ Students are required to record their attendance by initialing the square on the Attendance Sheet for each training session they are present, for the duration of their course.
- ☺ Students are required to come to class sober and free from the influence of illegal drugs. Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking area.
- ☺ Students are to pay all fees and charges associated with the course.
- ☺ Students are to report all injuries or incidents of harassment by another student or tutor promptly to your tutor or the General Manager/Office Manager respectively.
- ☺ Students are responsible for personal possessions while attending the course.
- ☺ Each student is expected to take responsibility for cleaning and tidying their work area at the end of each session and assisting with general class/venue tidying.
- ☺ The College expects support from all students and staff in implementing this Code of Conduct

The Policy and Procedures of the College are available for perusal at the Office.

## ***4. Student Discipline***

Students are expected to comply with the *Students Rights, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct* in the Student Handbook. Any breaches of this will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Student Discipline policy.

The *Student Discipline* policy provides for the fair and equitable treatment of all students and sets out a process whereby students are able to address alleged breaches of discipline. Where a tutor or a staff member believes that a student's behaviour poses a risk to other students, staff or the student him/herself, or breaches the Student Code of Conduct the tutor or staff member can direct the student to leave the premises. The process for dealing with alleged breaches of discipline will then be activated.

## **5. Privacy**

The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, integrity and security of all personal information entrusted to it in the normal course of its work. Accordingly, staff and tutors will respect students' and others' rights to privacy and shall not communicate personal information to others without the written permission of the person concerned.

Student telephone numbers and addresses will not be included as part of the class roll. Tutor's phone numbers or addresses will not be given to students. However, a student's request to speak to a tutor will be passed on by a member of staff.

The College provides certain statistical information about our students to the government to help with the future planning of education. This does not include personal information and each enrolment is allocated a numerical ID to protect student's privacy.

For further information on privacy please refer to our Privacy policy OSS009

## **6. College Facilities**

### ***Port Macquarie - 77 Hastings River Drive***

- Upon arrival for your class, please go directly to your class room. Other venues will provide a meeting area.
- A kitchen is provided for tea and coffee etc with an honour system of \$1 per cup.
- There is no provision for parking at the rear of the premises for daytime classes, Monday to Friday.
- It is recommended that students use daytime parking in the public areas of Hastings River Drive including the access road opposite the College and in Bellbowrie St.
- Students may access different resources at the College to enhance the learning of their course. Internet access is also available. Please enquire at Administration.

The College premises at Hastings River Drive are part of a Strata Plan and as such we share property common to other parties occupying the adjacent business and building. In particular, students are asked to assist the College in observing the following bylaws under the Strata Schemes Management Act (1996):

- **Behaviour of Owners and Occupiers**  
*An owner or occupier of a lot when on common property must be adequately clothed and must not use language or behave in a manner likely to cause offence or embarrassment to the owner or occupier of another lot or to any person lawfully using the common property.*
- **Obstruction of Common Property**  
*An owner or occupier of a lot must not obstruct lawful use of common property by any person except on a temporary and non-recurring basis.*
- **Behaviour of Invitees**  
*An owner or occupier of a lot must take all reasonable steps to ensure that*

*invitees of the owner or occupier do not behave in a manner likely to interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of the owner or occupier of another lot or any person lawfully using common property.*

Students are asked to observe all parking regulations and smoking and non-smoking areas.

### ***Wauchope - 5 Bain St***

The Wauchope campus is located on the corner of Bain St and Hastings St a short walk from the main street. The office hours are 9.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

The premises are wheelchair accessible and there is a kitchen for tea and coffee. The campus consists of one computer room with 9 computers, a meeting room and a general purpose room which has 4 computers.

Courses also operate from other venues in Wauchope, details of which are available on enrolment. Street parking only is available at Bain St.

*Information about facilities at other locations is available from the Administration Office or your tutor.*

## ***7. Class Enrolments and Refund Policy***

- Phone enrolments can be taken, however a place in the class is not secure until the course fee is paid in full.
- Positions in classes are NOT transferable.
- Refunds in full will only be given for courses cancelled by PMCC.
- If a student withdraws from a course, refunds will only be given if course withdrawal notification is received by PMCC four (4) working days prior to the start of the course, less a \$15.00 administration charge.
- Refunds are made by cheque or EFTPOS. Cheques can be collected from PMCC or alternatively can be posted.
- No refunds will be given after course commencement.

*For a complete understanding of our Enrolment and Refund Policies please refer to the College full Policies and Procedures which are available on request held at the Administration Office of the College. Our Enrolment and Refund policy are also available from our website [www.portace.com.au](http://www.portace.com.au).*

## ***8. Learning Outcomes / Elements of Competency for Accredited Vocational Courses***

If you are enrolled in an **accredited vocational course** your tutor will provide you with a copy of the Learning Outcome/Elements of Competency in the first class which you will be asked to read. Your tutor will also explain the learning outcomes/elements of competency of your course to you in “plain english”.

In **general and leisure courses**, the tutor will explain the outcomes of the course in the first class.

## **9. Assessment**

For **accredited vocational courses** the assessment requirements and timing will be outlined clearly in the first class so you will have an indication of what you are required to achieve and when. Late assessment tasks will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the tutor.

### **Assessment Appeals Process**

Where a student disputes the result of an assessment, the following procedure is implemented:

- the VET Coordinator/General Manager will view the assessment tool to ascertain fairness, validity and reliability.
- the VET Coordinator/General Manager will consult with the tutor and student, individually.
- the student will be advised of the outcome of this consultation process within 2 working days of the dispute being lodged.
- if it is decided that there is a case for review, a suitably qualified, independent assessor will be employed to conduct another assessment. An assessment date will be negotiated with the student. Following the assessment, the student will be advised of the result within 2 working days.
- If the student is not satisfied with any decisions made in this review process, he/she will be given a copy of the College's *Response to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations* policy and procedure.

There is no assessment for the **general and leisure courses**. Tutors will provide on-going feedback and guidance throughout the course.

## **10. Recognition of Prior Learning and Mutual Recognition**

Port Macquarie Community College recognises that adults bring to their learning a wide variety of experiences and this is taken into account when designing a program of learning for individual students.

All students of **accredited vocational courses** are able to apply for recognition of their experience and previous education and training. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may enable you to demonstrate that you have a number of the units of competency or learning outcomes and as a result you would not be required to do the whole course to gain the qualification. Information about this process is available from your tutor or the Administration Office. A fee will be charged for processing an RPL request.

PMCC as an RTO recognises all nationally accredited qualifications gained from any other RTO. Applying for Mutual Recognition may reduce the units of competency or learning outcomes you are required to complete to gain the qualification. Information

about the Mutual Recognition process is available from your tutor or the Administration Office.

## **11. Employability Skills**

Employability skills are also referred to as generic skills, capabilities or key competencies. Employability skills are incorporated within Training Packages qualifications and units of competency.

Employability Skills Summaries for Training Package qualifications can be downloaded from <http://employabilityskills.training.com.au>

## **12. Student Support**

Port Macquarie Community College is able to provide a range of support services and refer students to other community support services.

If you think you will have difficulty with achieving the outcomes of the course, discuss this with your tutor or the General Manager. It is best if this can be done prior to commencing the class or as early as possible once the class commences so your needs can be assessed and accommodated if possible.

PMCC offers specialised support in the areas of language, literacy and numeracy. Both individual support and courses are available.

If your tutor is aware of your special learning needs then he/she is able to make reasonable adjustment to the delivery of the course. For example handouts can be provided in larger font, the seating in the room can be re-arranged to assist with hearing and vision needs, classrooms can be allocated to assist with access.

## **13. Tips on Taking Notes in Class**

Developing effective note-taking practices can assist with your learning and preparation for assessment tasks.

Here are few ideas on methods:

- (a) colour different points/ideas/sections;
- (b) illustrate using graphics or flow charts;
- (c) use a mind map to link ideas and provide a visual that is easy to remember
- (d) contrast styles of writing;
- (e) arrange information into short chunks;
- (f) use headings to give clues to notes;
- (g) use highlighting pens;
- (h) use asterisks, arrows, draw a key to represent the main ideas;
- (i) use post it notes to summarise points

Remember note-taking is not recording verbatim what the tutor has said but the key points, concepts and linkages between these.

## **14. Collection of Certificates**

If your course is one where a Certificate is granted then those Certificates will be ready for collection from the Administration office in Hastings River Drive 10 working days after the completion of the course. These certificates will not be posted and should be collected from the office as soon as possible. Certificates and Statements of Attainment are only issued after successful completion of the unit/s of competency.

## **15. Accessing Information on Policies and Procedures**

You are able to access the College's policy and procedures information from the Administration office. The manuals are regularly up-dated as legislation and reporting requirements change so it is advisable to always seek the most up-to-date version of any policy or procedure. The manuals cannot be removed from the premises but a copy of a policy can be made. Key policies are also located on our website [www.portace.com.au](http://www.portace.com.au).

Policies and procedures that may be of interest include:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PMCC Policy Statement</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Risk Management</b>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Code of Practice</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Advertising &amp; Promotion</b>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Code of Conduct</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Child Protection</b>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Access and Equity</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Induction of Staff &amp; Tutors</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Student Rights &amp; Responsibilities</b>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Harassment</b>                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Assessment &amp; Appeals Processes</b>                               | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Records Management</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Responding to Suggestions,<br/>Complaints and Allegations Policy</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Privacy Policy</b>                  |

## **16. Your Feedback**

Port Macquarie Community College is always trying to improve its processes and range of course and programs so we can provide students and the community with a high quality service that meets local needs.

Your feedback is valued and we will formally seek your comments at the completion of each course with a Learner Survey and evaluation form. The information collected is used to by the tutors and the Program Co-ordinator to improve course delivery and content and the College in selecting the range of courses offered.

We welcome your feedback at other times.

If you wish to make formal suggestions or complaints please refer to the policy on *Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations* available on our website or the Administration office.